

REMARKS

The non-final Office Action was issued on pending claims 1-13. Claims 1-13 stand rejected. In this Response, claims 1-13 have been cancelled without prejudice and claims 14 and 15 have been added. Thus, claims 14 and 15 are pending in the application.

Applicant invites the Examiner to call Applicant's Representative to discuss any issues with this application.

Specification Amendments

The specification filed with this application is an English language translation of the Japanese language specification from the Japanese priority application. The specification has been amended to correct typographical errors found in the English language translation of the specification. No new matter has been added.

New Claims

Independent claim 14 and dependent claim 15 have been added. Claim 14 includes various features of original claims 1, 3 and 4. Claim 14 also includes features of the invention disclosed in the specification at the second paragraph of page 9 and the second paragraph of page 10. Claim 15 is supported by Figs. 5 and 6. Therefore, claims 14 and 15 are supported by the application as originally filed. Applicant submits claims 14 and 15 are allowable.

Claims 1-13 have been cancelled without prejudice in favor of claims 14 and 15.

Claim Objections and Claim Rejections

Office Action paragraph 1 objects to claims 1, 3, 6 and 7 as containing informalities. The Office Action at paragraph 3 rejects claim 7 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Paragraph 5 of the Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 7, 9, 10, 12 and 13 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oda (US 6,088,888) in view of Fujimoto (US 4,231,137). Paragraph 6 of the Office Action rejects claim 5 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oda in view of Fujimoto and further in view of Bauer (US 5,953,795). Paragraph 7 of the

Office Action rejects claims 6 and 8 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oda in view of Fujimoto and further in view of Morita (US 5,125,134). Paragraph 8 of the Office Action rejects claim 11 under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oda in view of Fujimoto and further in view of Friedberg (US Re 31,487).

As mentioned above, claims 1-13 have been cancelled in favor of claims 14 and 15.

As to the informality objections, claims 14 and 15 have been written to correct the informalities.

Thus, Applicant submits that the objections and rejections should be withdrawn.

Applicant submits new claim 14 is allowable over the combination of Oda and Fujimoto. Claim 14 calls for “the rotary plates 12, 13 having inwardly-projecting rims 29, 29’ formed on the respective peripheral edges of the recesses 28, 28’ in order to retain the first and second annular magnets within the recesses.” The reference numbers inserted into the claim text is merely for reference purposes to the example of the invention shown in the drawings and are not intended to limit the claims. Applicant’s invention can provide advantages. For example, because of the claimed feature quoted above, the first and the second annular magnets 18, 18’ can be firmly retained within the recesses 28, 28’ for prolonged periods of use, even if clothing bearing the separable end stop is heavily washed.

Contrary to the present invention, Oda and Fujimoto simply do not have or suggest the claimed feature of the rotary plates having inwardly-projecting rims formed on the respective peripheral edges of the recesses in order to retain the first and second annular magnets within the recesses. The Office Action acknowledges that Oda fails to have magnetic elements on rotary plates. Furthermore, in the device of Fujimoto, the metallic parts 11 and 12 do not have projecting rims to retain the magnets. Rather, Fujimoto describes the magnets 14 and 24 as being held by press fit, crimping or even an adhesive agent. Fujimoto, column 2, lines 34-38. The magnets of Fujimoto may be liable to come off of the metallic parts 11 or fall out of the device, for example if the adhesive fails.

Thus, claim 14 is allowable. Dependent claim 15 is allowable at least for the reasons that claim 14 is allowable.

CONCLUSION

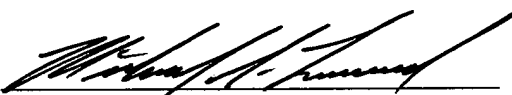
For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the patent application is in condition for allowance and requests a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

EVEREST INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LAW GROUP

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BY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael S. Leonard", is written over a horizontal line.

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